

You may be aware of Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their member stations to air a documentary unfavorable to John Kerry, "Stolen Honor", in the final days before the election. This documentary would be aired during prime time hours and would preempt regularly scheduled programming. This documentary is clearly a one-sided piece that accuses John Kerry of betraying American prisoners during the Vietnam War.

The American public has already been subjected to enough enough "smear" ads and other controversy surrounding the Vietnam war during this election season. Sinclair is doing the public a disservice by airing more of the same, right before the election. It would do much more good by airing programs that actually discuss the important issues of this campaign, such as jobs, health care, education, the environment, the war on terror, and the war in Iraq and in a balanced fashion with multiple viewpoints.

This is a clear example of the problems with media consolidation. Sinclair is allowed to use the public airwaves free of charge and is thus supposed to be required by law to serve the public interest with unbiased programming. But when large corporations control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and/or what is in line with the corporation's political agenda.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them, and why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

Thank you for your consideration.